

1900.

THE PRESIDENTIAL PROBLEM

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF

PRACTICAL POLITICS,

TOGETHER WITH A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE

NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

OF THE

REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

FOR HALF A CENTURY.

The within three articles by LOUIS G. HOYT, ESQ., Secretary of the N. H. Republican State Committee, were written for the EXETER (N. H.) NEWS-LETTER, and are reprinted to satisfy a demand that they be published in pamphlet form. As first published the article on the "Presidential Problem" appeared last.

E183

-H86

2-
A1220-10
12-1-10

65699

THE PRESIDENTIAL PROBLEM.

The renomination of both McKinley and Bryan follows a precedent which has happened but three times in the history of the country, where the same candidates have met in two Presidential elections, and in each instance the victorious party in the first contest has been defeated in the second.

In 1824 and in 1828 John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson were the opposing candidates of the two great parties. Adams won in 1824 and Jackson in 1828.

In 1836 and in 1840 Martin Van Buren and William Henry Harrison were the opposing candidates. Van Buren won in 1836 and Harrison in 1840.

In 1888 and in 1892 Benjamin Harrison and Grover Cleveland were opposed to each other as the Republican and Democratic candidates. Harrison won in 1888 and Cleveland in 1892.

Should McKinley be elected this fall, it will be the only instance in our history where a candidate for President has successfully met the same opponent in two national contests.

PARTY MANAGEMENT.

Few people realize the immense responsibility which will devolve upon party management as represented by national and state committees during the next few months.

Apparently trivial matters happening at a critical time in the closing hours of a campaign have defeated the ambition of some of our greatest men, and changed the whole character of our national policy.

Every word from now on publicly spoken by Mr. McKinley or Mr. Bryan will be flashed as news items to the four quarters of the country and made the subject of general discussion. The opposition will seek to distort every sentiment uttered by either into meanings never intended, but such as will tend to give party advantage.

Experience has shown this danger to be so great that parties demand of candidates that they place themselves entirely in the hands of the party management, and we have but two instances where Presidential nominees have refused to be thus subservient, and in each case the party has suffered defeat in consequence.

BLAINE'S MISTAKES.

The most recent of these cases is that of James G. Blaine, whose ability as a manager for others was superior perhaps to that of any man of his day, but who made a lamentable failure as a manager for himself.

Blaine not only directed his national committee to use the Cleveland scandal, which proved such a mistake, but dignified a similar scandal concerning himself by instituting a libel suit against a newspaper publisher. His permitting himself to be entertained by Jay Gould during the canvass gave the opposition papers an opportunity to point to this as evidence that he was under the influence of Wall street, and his giving Dr. Burchard an opportunity to address him in behalf of a delegation of ministers in the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York, while on his

way home from his western tour on the eve of the election, without having Dr. Burchard's address first submitted to him for inspection, were mistakes he never would have allowed others to make, and but for which Blaine would have been President. He lost New York by only 1200 votes, and Dr. Burchard's address wherein he alleged that Blaine's fight against the Democratic party was a fight against "Rum, Romanism and Rebellion" was responsible for this result. Mr. Blaine made no allusion to it in his reply. As a result the words were prominent in scare headlines in all the Democratic papers of the state the next morning, and were impressed so forcibly upon the Catholics that Blaine lost a considerable part of that vote which otherwise would have gone to him, and by this trivial incident was the life ambition of one of our greatest statesmen defeated.

A change of less than 600 votes in New York state would have changed the result in the nation.

THE OLD PROBLEM.

The adoption by the Democrats at Chicago in 1896 of a platform favoring the free coinage of silver at a ratio of 16 to 1 placed safely in the Republican column Connecticut, New Jersey and New York, with a total of 52 electoral votes, states which had before been doubtful. The result in these states had for some years been the determining factor in our Presidential elections.

While Indiana bears the unique distinction of being the only state which has cast her electoral vote for the winning candidate in every Presidential election since 1856, New York's only exception is when she voted for Seymour in 1868, omitting in both cases the Tilden-Hayes contest, where by counting in certain Southern states for Hayes which had given Democratic majorities, he was given a majority of one in the electoral college. But unlike Indiana the vote of

New York has determined the result in the nation in four recent elections.

In 1876 New York state cast its vote for Tilden and would have elected Hayes, without these Southern states. In 1880 it cast its vote for Garfield, and its support would have elected Hancock. In 1884 it voted for Cleveland and would have elected Blaine. In 1888 it voted for Harrison, and its vote would have re-elected Cleveland.

THE NEW PROBLEM.

With these three Eastern states against the Democrats a new problem in practical politics was presented, of carrying the country for Bryan without their aid. It was realized by all that the Chicago platform declared for principles which had a large following in the West, and that their declaration would create new political conditions the exact effect of which it was difficult to determine.

Indiana had for some years been the only Western state that had been reckoned doubtful, although in 1892 Wisconsin, for the first time in its history, and Illinois, for the first time since it voted for Buchanan in 1856, went Democratic, and Ohio and Michigan divided their electoral votes.

It was evident that the silver issue was going to take some of these Western states which had heretofore been safely Republican and place them in the Democratic column, but as no contest had before been fought out on these lines it was uncertain as to how great the changes might be, there being no precedents to guide in forming an opinion.

Mr. Bryan contended that on these issues he would carry the doubtful state of Indiana, and the Republican states of Kansas, Nebraska, Washington, Wyoming, Colorado, South Dakota, Montana, Nevada, California, Oregon, Iowa, Ohio and Illinois. He lost Indiana, but he carried the first eight of these Republican states, got one vote in California,

but failed to carry either of the last four states, which was fatal to his election.

The eight that he carried took from the Republicans 39 votes, which, with the one he got in California, gave him 40, or 4 more than the vote of New York state, but in doing this he had lost Delaware, Maryland and Kentucky, three Democratic states which gave McKinley 23 votes; so from the 40 votes he gained in the West he had to sacrifice 23 votes in the South, which left him a net gain of only 17 votes.

THE LESSON OF THE RETURNS.

An examination of the returns for 1896 shows that some of the states which went for Bryan and McKinley were so close that they must be placed as doubtful in the present contest.

States which have given the prevailing party a vote of 52 per cent., or less, of the *whole vote cast* have always been considered so close as to be doubtful for future results.

The last election showed the following to be such states, in some cases the states being carried by a plurality merely.

DOUBTFUL MCKINLEY STATES.

Electoral Votes.	
Indiana, 15	50.81 per cent.
California, 8.	51.93 " "
Kentucky, 12.	48.92 " "
Oregon, 4.	50.01 " "
Four states with 39 electoral votes.	

DOUBTFUL BRYAN STATES.

Electoral Votes.	
Kansas, 10	51.05 per cent.
Nebraska, 8.	51.93 " "
So. Dakota, 4.	49.69 " "
Wyoming, 3.	51.06 " "
Four states with 25 electoral votes,	

To which should be added one vote from California and one from Kentucky, which went for Bryan, making a total of 27 doubtful Bryan votes and 39 doubtful McKinley votes.

The Democratic proposition will be to hold the doubtful Bryan states and carry

the doubtful McKinley states, in which event the vote will stand as follows:

McKinley's electoral vote, 1896.....	271
Bryan's " " " "	176
McKinley's majority in 1896.....	95
Deducting the above 39 doubtful McKinley votes from the McKinley column and adding to the Bryan column gives this result:	
McKinley's electoral vote, 1900.....	232
Bryan's " " " "	215
McKinley's majority	17

It thus appears that if the Democrats succeed in holding all of their own and carrying all of the Republican states held in 1896 by a vote of 52 per cent., or less, of the *whole vote cast*, McKinley will then have 17 more votes than Bryan, and, of the doubtful Bryan states, Kansas in the last election gave a Republican plurality of 15,000 for governor and Wyoming a Republican plurality of 1,394, showing a Republican tendency, to say the least, while Oregon has just given an increased Republican majority.

A TOUGH PROBLEM.

It must be borne in mind that the above computation gives the Democrats every state in the Union in which the Republican vote in 1896 did not exceed 52 per cent. of the *whole vote cast* for all candidates, and not 52 per cent. of the combined Republican and Democratic votes. This makes, as the mathematicians say, "a tough problem" for the Democratic managers to successfully solve, but if they succeed in it they will still have a majority against them of 17 votes. They can overcome this only by taking nine more votes from McKinley states and adding to their own, which will, of course, make a difference of 18 votes.

The Republican states in which the McKinley vote in 1896 was lowest, aside from those appearing in the above list of doubtful McKinley states, are as follows,

the percentage being that of the Republican vote to the *whole vote cast*:

	Electoral votes.	
Ohio,	23	52.11 per cent.
West Virginia,	4	52.42 " "
Delaware,	3	53.41 " "
Michigan,	14	53.92 " "
Maryland,	8	54.60 " "
Illinois,	24	55.66 " "

To these states Bryan will have to look for these additional nine votes.

The meaning of the above percentages and the difficulty the Democrats will have in overcoming them can be better understood when it is said that it would mean the wiping out of a plurality for McKinley over Bryan of 47,000 in Ohio, 11,500 in West Virginia, 3300 in Delaware, 56,000 in Michigan, 32,000 in Maryland, 143,000 in Illinois.

These are the problems with which the National and State Committees of the two great parties will have to deal during the next few months. The partisans of each candidate in their zeal for the cause

they espouse will, between now and election, daily elect their respective idols in club rooms and country stores and on the street corners, the sporting man will demonstrate the sincerity of his opinions by wagers regulated only by the size of his pocket book, the Standard Oil Company will sell its petroleum to illuminate the anti-trust transparencies of both parties, and the gunpowder combine will run its works night and day to enable the politicians to keep up the courage of their constituents with fireworks and noise.

But the committees who have assumed the grave responsibilities of the campaign will not be misled by all this outward demonstration of patriotism and party loyalty. Their eyes will be fixed on the figures as they appear in the contests of the past, and the election of our next President will largely depend on the wisdom of their interpretation.

LOUIS G. HOYT.

Kingston, N. H., July 5, 1900.

REPUBLICAN CONVENTIONS.

That sentiment of liberty which impelled the colonists of 1776 to rebel against the mother country had, from time to time during the first half of the present century, manifested itself in its sympathy with the colored population of the South, and while the desire for the abolition of slavery on the one hand and its retention on the other had in 1856 not shown itself in the open rebellion of any of the states, yet on many occasions it had been threatened, and was such a bone of contention in congress and with the people that it not only formed a menace to the nation but a serious drawback to our prosperity as a people. The anti-slavery sentiment of the North was so strong at this time that it only required a spark to ignite it into a flame of indignation which would seriously threaten the continued ascendancy of the Democratic party, which had been in power continuously since 1800, with the exception of the temporary Whig triumphs of 1840 and 1848.

This spark was furnished by the passage in 1854 of a bill providing for the organization of two new territories north of latitude 36.30, under the names of Kansas and Nebraska, and permitting slavery therein if the people desired it. This bill looked toward the extension of slavery, repealing the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which expressly prohibited slavery north of 36.30, and aroused the most intense indignation throughout the North.

THE FIRST REPUBLICAN CONVENTION.

This feeling was so strong in 1856 that it was apparent it would become a lead-

ing issue in the campaign, although neither of the then dominant parties had the courage to accept the issue in their platforms. The Democrats nominated Buchanan, and the American or Know Nothing party, whose principle of faith was that "Americans must rule America," nominated Millard Fillmore.

In the convention which nominated Fillmore an effort was made for the adoption of an anti-slavery platform, but the majority of the convention voting against it a large body of delegates seceded and nominated John C. Fremont, thus giving birth to the Republican party, which four years later came into power and which has practically ruled the country ever since.

THE LINCOLN CONVENTION OF 1860.

In the election of 1856 the pivotal states were Pennsylvania and Indiana and the efforts of all parties were made to carry these two states, but the opposition to Buchanan was divided between Fillmore and Fremont, which assured Buchanan's success, but the returns showed that he had carried his own state of Pennsylvania by a majority of only 1025 votes and Indiana by a majority of only 1909. Fremont's immense vote in these states and throughout the North, which greatly exceeded Fillmore's, showed that anti-slavery was to be the chief issue between the contending parties of the future.

These figures demonstrated that when the leaders of the Republican party met in Chicago in 1860 to nominate a Presidential candidate their mission was not

so much one of sentiment as of practical politics.

Volumes of romance have been written as to the success of Lincoln in that convention, and his defeat of Seward has been generally attributed to an admiration for the ability Lincoln showed in his debates with Douglass, but the returns in the Fremont campaign made it manifest that the national contest then pending was to be decided by the votes of Pennsylvania and Indiana, and to the desire to nominate a candidate who could best unite the opposition to the Democrats in those states was due Seward's defeat in the convention.

William H. Seward in 1860 held a position as a leader in the Republican party analogous to that of James G. Blaine later, but unlike Blaine he had few personal enemies. Seward went into the convention with a large majority of the delegates favorable to his nomination, but the argument was advanced that both Pennsylvania and Indiana had their state elections in October, and it was absolutely necessary to win the October elections in order to carry these states in November, and in each of them it was essential to secure the support of the large Know Nothings vote of these states, in order to carry them for the Republicans. Seward could not command this support, because he had advocated a division of school funds in New York state between Catholics and Protestants, and the Know Nothings were hostile to anyone who had a friendly feeling for Catholics. The 78 delegates from Pennsylvania and Indiana opposed Seward's nomination for this reason, and were united on Lincoln. As a result of this opposition Seward led Lincoln by only 71 votes on the first ballot, three votes on the second, and was defeated by Lincoln's nomination on the third.

In the election, of the states which voted for Buchanan in 1856 Lincoln carried Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois. Califor-

nia and four votes in New Jersey, securing a majority of 57 votes in the electoral college.

Thus came into power a new party, which was destined for greater achievements than have heretofore been accomplished by any political organization in the history of either republics or empires.

LINCOLN'S RENOMINATION IN 1864.

It would hardly be expected that any prominent Republican would allow his name to be used in opposition to Lincoln's renomination, yet his opponents in the party were so numerous that they held a mass convention at Cleveland in 1864, and nominated John C. Fremont for President. The regular Republican convention renominated Lincoln by acclamation, and he carried every state in the Union, except New Jersey, Delaware and Kentucky, the Southern states not voting. At the time of his nomination, however, Lincoln had grave doubts of his re-election, and was so skeptical of the result of the October election in Pennsylvania that he furloughed ten thousand Pennsylvania soldiers to return home, "to vote as they fought."

GRANT NOMINATED IN 1868.

The position of General Grant as a politician in 1868 was somewhat like that of Admiral Dewey in 1900. While Grant, like Dewey, had been given his opportunities for acquiring distinction by a Republican administration in carrying out Republican policies, with which he was in entire sympathy, he had never voted anything but a Democratic ticket, and cast his first Republican ballot during his second term as president.

The Democrats realized the demoralization in which the war had left them and they early began a movement to nominate Grant as their candidate, which likely would have been successful had it not been for the bitter fight the Republicans were making against Johnson, who

then had Democratic support, and against whom Grant entertained feelings of intense hatred. While Grant was averse to leaving his life position in the army, he finally consented to accept the Republican nomination, which was given him by acclamation, his majority over Seymour in the electoral college being 134 votes, but Seymour carried both New York and New Jersey.

GRANT'S RENOMINATION IN 1872.

Grant's administration had been particularly factional, many of his army friends in whom he had placed his confidence had proven unworthy of it, and he was severely criticised, but the Republican opposition to him went into the Liberal Republican organization which nominated Greeley, so that when the Republican convention met in Philadelphia it was harmonious, and Grant was nominated by acclamation, and in the election he defeated the different tickets opposed to him by the overwhelming majority of 223 votes in the electoral college.

BLAINE'S AMBITION.

A sad fatality seemed to follow the presidential ambition of James G. Blaine, which in many respects resembled that of Henry Clay, each of whom had more devoted admirers than any two men in our history. Clay was twice defeated for nomination in years when his party triumphed in the election, and was nominated in 1844 only to be defeated by Polk. Blaine was likewise defeated for nomination in the conventions of 1876 and 1880, when the Republicans carried the elections, and was nominated in 1884 only to be defeated by Cleveland. While the chief ambition of his life was to be president, he had always said he never expected to attain it, but it was owing solely to the mistake of managing his own campaign, to which I shall refer in another article, that he suffered defeat in the election.

THE BLAINE—HAYES CONTEST OF 1876.

Blaine entered the convention of 1876 with a majority of the delegates favorable to him, but the delegates from Pennsylvania, which was strongly Blaine in sentiment, were held by instructions to vote for Governor Hartranft of that state, and there were other complications which prevented his having a majority on any one ballot, although a majority of the delegates had during the seven ballots which resulted in the nomination of Hayes actually voted for him. The seventh ballot gave Hayes 384 to 351 for Blaine and 21 for Bristow.

THE BLAINE-GARFIELD CONTEST OF 1880.

The most celebrated convention in the annals of either party was the Republican convention of 1880, where Grant's memorable 306 delegates, led by Roscoe Conkling, Blaine's bitterest foe, stood by him through 36 ballots, and Blaine's 280 delegates through 35.

James A. Garfield was at the head of the Ohio delegation which was instructed for Senator Sherman, and his speech nominating Sherman attracted such favorable attention that he was looked upon as a possible dark horse in case of a dead-lock between Grant and Blaine, but it was not until the 34th ballot that he had as many as 17 votes, which was increased to 50 on the 35th and on the 36th he received the support of Blaine and was nominated.

THE BLAINE-ARTHUR CONTEST OF 1884.

The friends of Blaine had made such a stubborn contest in two conventions and he had yielded to defeat with so much grace that the sentiment in favor of his nomination in 1884 was so strong as to make it certain that it was within his reach. He had been defamed in his previous contests without limit, and with the Grant-Conkling influence against him he had little heart to receive a nomination and enter a contest where he would

have to meet not only the abuse of his Democratic opponents, but the vindictiveness of the hostile forces within his own party. He, however, allowed his name to go before the convention, and on the fourth ballot received 541 votes to 207 for Chester A. Arthur.

The vote of New York state defeated him at the polls, and that state was so close that a change of less than 600 votes out of a total of 1,167,000 would have given him the state.

THE SHERMAN-HARRISON CONTEST OF 1888.

The Republican convention of 1888 had for its leading candidate John Sherman, of Ohio, for whom Pennsylvania had instructed its delegates, and on the first ballot he had 229 votes, the next highest candidate being Judge Gresham, of Indiana, with 111 votes, the others being distributed among ten other candidates. Sherman reached his highest vote on the second ballot, and it soon became apparent that he could not be nominated. Benjamin Harrison steadily increased his 21 votes on the first ballot until he led Sherman on the seventh and was nominated on the eighth, receiving one-half of Sherman's strength. New York's delegation steadily supported Depew.

HARRISON RE-NOMINATED IN 1892.

The party was practically united in favor of Harrison's re-nomination in 1892, which took place in the convention on the first ballot. He had aroused many antagonisms in the party during his administration, and had utterly failed to recognize the work of the leaders who had made his election possible. Blaine, it will be remembered, created surprise throughout the country by suddenly resigning as secretary of state just before the assembling of the convention, and starting for Europe. The opposition to

Harrison showed itself in the convention in the 192 votes cast for Blaine and 192 for McKinley.

Harrison was badly beaten at the polls, Cleveland carrying New York, Connecticut, New Jersey and California, and the strong Republican states of Illinois and Wisconsin, and receiving five votes from Michigan.

McKINLEY NOMINATED IN 1896.

The year 1896 found our industrial conditions severely depressed and the cheap money heresy gaining headway with the rank and file of both parties in the West and South. The demand for some sort of relief from existing conditions seemed to center on the more liberal use of silver as money, so that each party was forced to yield to the sentiment, the Democrats declaring for the free coinage of silver at a ratio of 16 to 1, without regard to the attitude of other nations, and the Republicans expressing opposition to free coinage, "except by international agreement, which we pledge ourselves to support."

This attitude of the Republicans on the financial issue caused the withdrawal of 34 delegates from the western states, after which the convention nominated McKinley by an overwhelming majority over Reed.

NEW PROBLEMS.

The attitude of the Democrats on the silver question while strengthening the Republicans in the East weakened them in the West, and created problems in practical politics entirely new in the history of our parties, which I shall take occasion to discuss in another article, after the platforms are made up at Philadelphia and Kansas City.

LOUIS G. HOYT.

Kingston, N. H., June 4, 1900.

DEMOCRATIC CONVENTIONS.

To give a history of the conventions of the Democratic party would necessitate going back to the Congressional caucus which nominated Jefferson in 1804.

Prior to this the constitution provided that the Presidential electors should meet and each vote for two candidates for President, and the candidate receiving the largest number of votes for President, if a majority, should be President, and the second largest vote for President should be Vice President, but in 1800 Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr, both of the same party, received the same number of electoral votes for President, whereby the election went into the House, each state being entitled to cast one vote and that to be determined by a majority of the delegation, a majority of the states being required to elect. For 35 ballots Jefferson received the votes of eight states and Burr of six, two states being tied in their delegations and so unable to vote. This made nine states necessary for a choice, and it was not until the 36th ballot that Jefferson was elected by the vote of Vermont, which broke the tie in its delegation by one of its delegates refusing to vote.

This complication brought about an amendment to the constitution which took effect in 1804, whereby the electors were to vote for one candidate for President and one for Vice President.

At this time most of the electors were chosen by the legislatures of the several states, instead of by popular vote, and were supposed to use their individual judgment in voting for President, without any prior understanding or pledges, such as are implied in nominating conventions, but the experience of parties up to this time showed the necessity of a

uniform understanding relative to the candidates to be voted for by the electors, before the latter were chosen.

After this, and for many years, the Presidential nominations were made by members of congress in a congressional caucus, and it was not until 1830 that a political national convention was held in this country, brought about by the death of William Morgan, who, it was claimed, was murdered by the Masons for revealing the secrets of the order, and originating the anti-Masonic party, which attained much power.

This precedent was followed in 1831 by the National Republicans, who nominated Clay, and by the present Democratic party in 1832, which was called to nominate a candidate for Vice President only, Jackson's claim to selection as President being conceded. At this convention the Democrats adopted a rule which required a two-thirds vote to nominate, and which has been the rule of every Democratic convention since.

From Jefferson's time until 1860 the Democratic party ruled the country, being disturbed only by the temporary Whig triumphs of Harrison over Van Buren in 1840 and of Taylor over Lewis Cass in 1848, neither of which changed the general policy of the country in any material respect.

It being my intention only to refer to the Democratic conventions which have taken place since that party first met its present adversary in 1856, I will pass along to that time, except to refer to the convention of 1852 which conferred its distinguished honor upon a citizen of New Hampshire.

NEW HAMPSHIRE HONORED IN 1852.

When the Democratic convention met

at Baltimore in 1852 the Whig party was demoralized by the different views of its leaders on the question of restricting slavery in its territory recently acquired through the annexation of Texas. President Taylor began with one policy, which was soon changed by his death and the substitution of another by the elevation to the presidency of Vice President Fillmore.

Webster had cast his lot with Clay and the pro-slavery wing of the party, resulting in the passage of the Clay Compromise, which declared against the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and in favor of the admission of Utah and New Mexico as Territories without restrictions as to slavery. This measure greatly weakened the Whigs, but was so acceptable to the Democrats of the North as to thoroughly unite that party.

While the Democratic convention of this year was free from any bitterness of feeling, it took 49 ballots to nominate. Out of the 288 votes in the convention Cass started with 116, which he practically maintained up to the 45th ballot. Buchanan started with 93, and could do no more than hold his own. Douglass started with 20, and reached 92 on the 30th ballot. There was no decisive change until the 35th ballot, when Virginia, whose influence was then potential in Democratic circles, cast a solid vote for Franklin Pierce, whose name had not before been mentioned. Pierce doubled this vote on the next ballot, and remained practically stationary until the 49th, when he received substantially the unanimous vote of the convention.

Pierce's majority over Gen. Scott in the electoral college was overwhelming, Scott carrying only Vermont, Massachusetts, Tennessee and Kentucky. His great victory over the Whigs, who carried all the larger states of the Union in the preceding election, except Ohio, has been urged on many occasions since as

an argument in favor of the nomination of a "dark horse."

Pierce was a gentleman of the old school, and a very good school it was, too. I remember passing him while he was driving with his wife when I, as a boy, was driving with another boy in one of Hampton's famous "dingle carts," and to our astonishment he saluted us with that genial smile for which he was noted, and with as much consideration as he would give a personal acquaintance. I speak of the incident because he was New Hampshire born and bred.

THE PIERCE-BUCHANAN CONTEST OF 1856.

Pierce's administration had stirred up much sectional strife by his reopening the slavery issue in adopting as a Democratic measure the bill allowing the people of Kansas and Nebraska to decide the question of slavery for themselves, contrary to the provisions of the Missouri Compromise of 1820. He was a candidate for re-election in the convention of 1856, and received 122 votes to 133 for Buchanan. His vote, however, gradually fell, and Buchanan's gradually rose, until the latter was nominated on the 17th ballot, and he was the last of the Democratic presidents for many years. The party became hopelessly crushed under the weight of slavery, not to rise until twenty years after the latter had been abolished by the hand of Lincoln.

THE DEMOCRATIC SPLIT OF 1860.

The Democratic convention of 1860 met at Charleston, April 23d, under most un-auspicious circumstances, with the party hopelessly divided in its slavery views, and its delegates opposed to each other in bitter rivalry for the enforcement of their several ideas in the party platform.

The committee on platform made majority and minority reports, Gen. B. F. Butler making a report of his own, and Senator Bayard still another. All the platforms were finally recommitted to the committee, which afterwards made two

reports. Finally the minority report, being the Douglass platform, was adopted, whereupon the Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Texas, Louisiana and South Carolina delegations withdrew, including Senator Bayard, of Delaware.

The attendance being so largely decreased, a rule was adopted that two-thirds of a full convention, being 202 votes, should be necessary for a choice, and the convention proceeded to ballot. Only 252 delegates were present, and of these, Stephen A. Douglass had 145 votes on the first ballot, and maintained this number for 57 ballots, being unable to obtain two-thirds of the vote of a full convention. The convention thereupon voted to adjourn to Baltimore, June 18th.

The Baltimore meeting soon got into a wrangle over the admission of delegates, which resulted in the retirement of Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, California, Delaware, and a part of Maryland and Kentucky, and finally of their chairman, Caleb Cushing. What there was left finally nominated Douglass, but the delegates present not numbering two-thirds of the full convention they had to decide that as Douglass had two-thirds of all of those present he was the party nominee.

The seceders from this Baltimore convention immediately organized a convention of their own and took in the seceders from the Charleston convention of April 23d. Caleb Cushing was made chairman, and John C. Breckenridge having all the votes cast was declared the Democratic candidate for President.

In the election, while Douglass received only 12 electoral votes to 72 for Breckenridge, he received 1,375,157 popular votes to 847,953 for Breckenridge.

McCLELLAN'S CHANCES IN 1864.

Strange as it may seem at this distance of time, there was a strong feeling in 1864 that Lincoln could not be re-elected. Many of the strongest Republican leaders

shared this feeling, including Chase, Wade, Greeley, Thaddeus Stevens and even Lincoln himself. The country was terribly weary of the war, and when the Democratic convention met at Chicago on August 29 the end was not in sight.

General McClellan was the popular idol of the Democrats, and it was thought he had not been given a fair chance. He was then in retirement, having been removed from the army of the Potomac in 1862. He was accepted as the nominee of the convention on the first ballot, and could the election have taken place on the day of his nomination his chances for success would have been good, but the delegates had scarcely got home before the country was ringing with cheers for the successful arrival of Sherman at Atlanta, "breaking the backbone" of the Confederacy, and giving sunshine to us of the North, who had been for so long "waiting for the dawn of peace." As a result of these changed conditions he was overwhelmingly defeated.

THE SEYMOUR CONVENTION OF 1868.

In 1868 there was a large liberal Republican sentiment in the Democratic party favorable to the nomination of Chief Justice Chase, owing to the way Chase presided over the Johnson impeachment trial, and in the resolutions of their convention they declared that "President Johnson is entitled to the gratitude of the whole American people." Early in the year there was also a movement by the Democrats to nominate General Grant, who had never voted anything but a Democratic ticket. Samuel J. Tilden succeeded in stopping both of these movements. The convention met on July 4, Horatio Seymour presiding. The leading candidates were George H. Pendleton, General Hancock and Thomas A. Hendricks. Finally on the 22d ballot, the convention being unable to unite on any of these, a break was made for Seymour and he was nominated.

THE GREELEY CAMPAIGN OF 1872.

No administration since Jackson's was so despotic as Grant's, and he alienated from the party many of its ablest leaders. There never was a time when so many strong men identified themselves with an open revolt from any party as in 1872.

The leaders called a convention of Liberal Republicans to meet in Cincinnati in May. Charles Francis Adams, Horace Greeley and Lyman Trumbull were the leading candidates before this convention, which nominated Greeley on the sixth ballot by a slight lead over Adams. The Democrats held their convention in July, adopted the Liberal Republican platform and nominated Greeley on the first ballot. The character of Greeley's support looked like his success, but the people were not with him, and Grant's victory at the polls was overwhelming. The Democratic opposition to Greeley found expression in the nomination of Charles O'Connor at Louisville in September.

THE TILDEN CONVENTION OF 1876.

Of the political organizers of the country Samuel J. Tilden never had a superior. He was quiet, adroit and sagacious, and a man of large fortune, who had acquired a national reputation through his courageous efforts to bring the Tweed ring to justice. When the Democratic convention met at St. Louis in June it was apparent that he was to be the party nominee, but he was bitterly opposed by Tammany and they openly avowed he could never carry New York state, which would be essential for his election. Thomas A. Hendricks was his principal opponent, but Tilden was so far in the lead on the first ballot that he was nominated on the second, and Hendricks was taken for vice president.

This ticket carried all the doubtful states of the North and West, but was defeated by the vote of three southern states which had Democratic majorities on the face of the returns.

HANCOCK NOMINATED IN 1880.

The Democratic convention of 1880 met at Cincinnati, and the Democrats based great hopes for their success in the election in the factional quarrels between the Grant and Blaine forces in the Republican convention of three weeks before. This was Grant's third term contest where he held his 306 delegates through 36 ballots, and his friends had refused to be reconciled to his defeat. Tilden's name was being urged until the second day of the Democratic convention, when he withdrew, owing to the violent opposition of Tammany, who openly threatened a bolt. The three leading candidates were General Hancock, Senator Bayard and Samuel J. Randall, Hancock being nominated on the second ballot.

CLEVELAND'S FIRST CONTEST IN 1884.

It fell to the lot of the Democratic convention in 1884 to nominate the first successful candidate it had had for over a quarter of a century. The political mistakes of Garfield's short administration had so impressed themselves on the party that President Arthur's more diplomatic course was unable to entirely remove their injurious effect on Republican harmony.

The attention of the nation had been called to the able administration of Grover Cleveland as Governor of New York by the immense vote he had received for that office, and his independence had made a profound impression upon the "mugwump" vote. When the Democratic convention met in 1884 the delegates were aware that New York would be the pivotal state in the election, and although he was earnestly opposed by Tammany, under the unit rule Cleveland received the solid vote of the New York delegation, and was nominated on the second ballot. Bayard, Hendricks and Randall were his chief but not formidable opponents.

CLEVELAND'S RENOMINATION IN 1888.

The Democratic convention of 1888 met at St. Louis June 5 and re-nominated Cleveland without a dissenting voice, but he was defeated at the polls.

CLEVELAND'S GREAT CONTEST OF 1892.

The Democratic convention of 1892 was one of the most remarkable in the history of political parties in that Cleveland, its nominee, was a resident of New York state, New York was recognized as the pivotal state in the election, and the New York delegation was solid against his nomination.

The convention proceedings were acrimonious to an unusual degree. Cleveland's forces were led by William C. Whitney, and his opponents by that matchless orator, Bourke Cochran. On the first ballot he received 10 more than the necessary two-thirds required to nominate, his chief opponents being Senator Hill and Governor Boies, of Iowa.

After the nomination it was generally conceded by all parties that he would meet defeat at the polls, but although the politicians were against him the people were with him, and he carried New York and all the doubtful states, and the Republican states of Illinois and Wisconsin, and received a part of the vote of California, North Dakota, Michigan and Ohio.

BRYAN AT CHICAGO IN 1896.

When the Democratic convention met at Chicago in 1896 the country was in a condition of great unrest owing to the existing industrial depression, and there was a persistent determination on the part of a large portion of the voters in the West to attribute all our ills to the restricted use of silver in our monetary system.

The national committee was in the control of the sound money men of the party and named Senator Hill for chairman, but the Silverites were so suspicious of the intentions of the sound money men that they bitterly opposed his choice and

carried the fight into the convention, where he was defeated by a vote of 356 to 349. The committee on credentials decided all contests in favor of the free-silver delegates, after which a protracted debate was had over the platform, during which Governor Russell, of Massachusetts made an eloquent and what turned out to be the last speech of his life in favor of moderation, and William J. Bryan, who headed the contested Nebraska delegation, which had been let in, made his famous "crown of thorns" speech in favor of free silver, after which the sound money plank of the minority was rejected by a vote of 626 to 303. The convention also refused to endorse the Cleveland administration.

This result so enraged the sound money Democrats that 178 of them refused to vote for a candidate for President, and many returned to their homes with the fixed purpose to repudiate the whole thing by supporting the sound money candidate of the Republicans, among them being Frank Jones and Irving W. Drew, of New Hampshire.

On the first ballot Bland, of Missouri, led with 235 votes, Bryan being next with 119, the balance being divided among ten candidates. On the second and third ballots Bland continued to lead Bryan, both gaining, and on the fourth Bryan had 280 votes to Bland's 241. On the fifth Bryan only lacked 12 votes of the necessary two-thirds, but before the vote was declared enough delegates changed their votes to give him the nomination.

In the election the East went solid against Bryan, but he made great gains in the West, carrying many states that had before been loyal to the Republicans.

Should Bryan be nominated at Kansas City, as he is certain to be, the precedents favor his election, but of this I shall speak in my next article.

LOUIS G. HOYT.

Kingston, N. H., June 15, 1900.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 011 695 594 5^{nc}